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Introducing the United States Extremis Crime Database (ECDB)

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Research Note

Introducing the United States Extremis Crime Database (ECDB)

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This note describes a new and unique, open source, relational database called the United States Extremist Crime Database (ECDB). We first explain how the ECDB was created and outline its distinguishing features in terms of inclusion criteria and assessment of ideological commitment. Second, the article discusses issues related to the evaluation of the ECDB, such as reliability and selectivity. Third, descriptive results are provided to illustrate the contributions that the ECDB can make to research on terrorism and criminology.

Keywords Al Qaeda related crimes, database construction, domestic terrorism, extremist crime, far-right crime, political violence

Inclusion Criteria

To be included in the ECDB, an incident or scheme must satisfy a two-pronged test. First, an illegal violent incident or an illegal financial scheme must be committed inside the United States. Second, at least one of the suspects who perpetrated the illegal act must subscribe to an extremist belief system.

Behavioral Prong

Appendix 1 lists the crimes included in the ECDB. The ECDB includes violent incidents¹ in which an extremist commits a homicide, suicide, or is killed by law enforcement. The ECDB includes bombings and acts of arson committed by environmental/animal rights extremists and foiled plots by both far-right and Al Qaeda-inspired and other Islamist extremists. Our pre-test of these cases found that what some media accounts and others have labeled as foiled plots include a large number of disparate acts. We therefore created a typology that is set forth in Appendix 2. This typology could aid terrorism researchers, especially those interested in comparing successful and unsuccessful attacks. The ECDB also collects information on financial crimes. An increasing number of extremists commit mostly profit-driven crime, such as money laundering and terrorism financing, as opposed to acts like hijackings with ransom demands where profit might not be the primary motive.² Al Qaeda-inspired and other Islamist extremists have used financial fraud to raise funds for terrorism,³ while far-right extremist tax protesters have used tax evasion as a form of anti-government protest.⁴

Attitudinal Prong

The ECDB only includes violent and financial crimes committed by one or more suspects who adhered to a far-right, Al Qaeda-inspired, or extremist animal/environmental

rights belief system.⁵ Although there are no universally accepted definitions for these belief systems, it was critical to base them on literature reviews of these movements, existing typologies, and feedback we solicited from terrorism scholars. Appendix 3 sets forth these definitions.

Building the ECDB

We identified crimes from various sources. We first reviewed existing terrorism databases. Some databases (e.g., RAND-MIPT) include rich data on court proceedings. Second, we examined official sources, such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Department of Justice (DOJ). The FBI used to publish an annual *Terrorism in the United States* report, while some DOJ agencies issue detailed press releases about each indictment linked to relevant court documents. Third, we reviewed scholarly and journalistic accounts, focusing on chronologies and case studies.⁶ Fourth, we reviewed material published by private watch-groups. Media publications were the fifth source we used. We used these sources to create a listing of illegal violent incidents and financial schemes committed by extremists in the United States. Appendix 4 lists the specific sources we reviewed.

Each case and related suspects and victims were searched in over 30 web search engines to uncover relevant open source information. Appendix 5 lists these web search engines. Data searchers focused on obtaining information from national outlets and newspapers specific to the region where the crime occurred and where the related suspect and victims resided.

Open source searches uncovered media accounts, government documents, indictments, appellate court decisions, other legal documents, videos, blogs, books, watch-group reports, materials produced by extremists, and scholarly accounts. All information was digitally archived and provided to a coder who verified that the original searches did not exclude important information. The coders relied on these materials to code predetermined variables found in our incident, scheme, suspect, victim, and target forms.

Evaluating the ECDB

The uncovered search materials contained documents from different source types that occasionally contained conflicting information. These discrepancies implicated reliability issues related to source type. In these situations, greater weight was granted to the more “trusted” source. Similar to Sageman, “in decreasing degrees of reliability...[we favor] court proceedings subject to cross examination, followed by reports of court proceedings, then corroborated information from people with direct access to information provided, uncorroborated statements from people with that access, and finally statements from people who had heard the information secondhand.”⁷ Appendix 6 lists the source types in degrees of decreasing reliability.

Because the ECDB uses multiple coders, we addressed inter-rater (i.e., coder) reliability. Importantly though, unlike projects that are static and collect data at one point in time, the ECDB and other terrorism databases are large-scale ongoing efforts. The ECDB updates values as new information becomes available. Such a process requires substantial resources of money, time, and efforts to keep the databases current. It is difficult to engage in standard inter-rater reliability practices. Nevertheless, we addressed this important issue in a number of ways. First, coders

were trained. New coders initially coded previously coded cases and both sets of values were compared. We created a listserv of ECDB personnel and instructed coders to share difficult issues. In this way, inconsistencies were addressed early in the coding process. Second, coding abnormalities were continually checked across coders. Third, filling in values for certain ECDB variables required little interpretation as the variables captured basic facts such as a suspect's race, age, or gender. Fourth, a database analyst subsequently validated all incident records, verifying that coders systematically applied the coding rules when creating relational records for suspects, victims, targets, and their networks. Where coding inconsistencies occurred, records were updated and corrected so that coding procedures were uniform across all research assistants and incidents. Fifth, we conducted an initial measurement of inter-rater reliability for selected individual and situational characteristics of far-right homicides and found coder agreement between 89% and 98% of the time. When coders disagreed it was usually not because of differences in the values coded, but because one coder found a document that contained information that could be coded, while the second coder did not find it. It is thus important to have multiple coders both search and code each incident when using open-source materials.

We also focused on filling in missing values by conducting intensive follow-up searches for key suspect and victim variables (e.g., suspect/victim race, sex, age, their relationship; weapon used) and were able to fill in 99–100% of these variables values. Sources used included: state, local, and federal inmate locators; online local court dockets; FBI's Supplemental Homicide Report; the social security death index; online national record aggregators such as Ancestry.com, Been Verified, and Archives.com; and news aggregates.

Finally, we examined selectivity bias. First, we looked at 10 sources (such as the FBI, the Anti-Defamation League, etc.) that the ECDB used to identify far-right homicides.⁸ After examining these sources' similarities and differences, we normalized their criteria to accurately assess variations in the events they included. We used a "catchment-re-catchment" analysis and found that the inclusion of additional sources result in decreasing numbers of target events not identified in previous sources and an increasing number of events that were identified in previous sources. Thus, collectively the sources appear to be approaching capturing the universe of eligible events. This suggests that selectivity bias may be less a problem than initially feared. Second, we are in the process of obtaining listings of the media sources used by Lexis-Nexis (LN) for the years 1990 to the present, the year LN began using the source and its geographic coverage by year. We will examine the correlation between the number of sources and homicide incidents per state for each time period to see if as the number of sources increases the number of homicide incidents also increases in that state (i.e., possible selectivity bias). Our goal is to determine if the identification of homicide incidents is impacted by variation in the number of sources over different temporal periods and geographic areas.

Findings Illustrating the ECDB's Unique Contributions

Below we present some descriptive results to demonstrate how the ECDB can be a resource for scholars and practitioners. We discuss financial crimes committed by far-right extremists and Al Qaeda-inspired Islamist extremists, and violent crimes committed by far-right extremists because these data are the most complete.⁹

The ECDB does not limit itself to acts labeled terrorist by the FBI and prosecuted on the federal level. Most American terrorism databases and definitions,

like the FBI, require terrorist acts to use “force or violence” and exclude non-violent financial crimes.¹⁰ This is an important omission because the ECDB has identified close to 700 financial schemes¹¹ that were perpetrated by far-rightists and Al Qaeda-inspired Islamist extremists in the U.S. The total financial loss of these schemes is over \$700,000,000. Far-rightists perpetrated over 540 schemes, most commonly consisting of tax avoidance crimes. Al Qaeda, Hamas, Hezbollah and similar inspired extremists committed over 150 financial schemes such as money-laundering and material support to terrorists. Since data collection is ongoing, these numbers may change. These data allow us to conduct longitudinal analysis to examine changes in financial extremist crime trends over time and to explore the relational ties between extremists and non-extremist associates to understand how financial extremist networks are formed and operate.

The ECDB has identified over 370 homicide incidents committed by far-rightists in the U.S. between 1990 and 2010. The year with the most homicides events was 2007 ($N=31$) and the lowest was 1991 ($N=9$). Geographically, the majority of far-right homicides occurred in the western region of the United States and in cities with populations less than 100,000. On the state-level, California (19%), Florida (6%), and Texas (15%) accounted for 40% of all incidents. Twelve states did not have a single far-right homicide. Even more interesting, 18 states did not have a single ideologically-motivated far-right homicide. In future work, we will investigate if theories of right-wing mobilization, such as McVeigh’s Power Devaluation Theory,¹² and criminological frameworks can account for this finding. We will also investigate county-level variation and examine if criminology’s social disorganization theory can shed light on this variation. One hundred forty-five of these fatal events were ideologically-motivated attacks. The most frequent ideological motivational circumstance was racial animus followed by anti-government sentiment.

Although domestic terrorism databases have excluded violent lone actor attacks and incidents prosecuted state-level, the ECDB includes these acts. This is important because over 80% of tried far-right suspects in the ECDB who committed ideological homicide incidents were prosecuted on the state level. Similarly, lone actors committed over 35% of these ideologically-motivated homicides. Many claim that attacks by lone wolves are difficult to prevent and pose a greater challenge than attacks committed by organized groups.¹³ The first step to crafting effective policies is to provide law enforcement officials with the best knowledge and practices available from empirical data.

The ECDB tracks ideologically-motivated and non-ideological crimes committed by extremists. Most terrorism databases exclude crimes committed for non-ideological reasons.¹⁴ ECDB data indicate that focusing only on ideologically-motivated crimes misses important information. Only around 40% of fatal far-right strikes were ideologically-motivated and 20% were non-ideological, but were related to the extremist movement. These non-ideological but movement related homicides include incidents involving internal organizational disputes (e.g., killing an informer or fatal attacks over drugs or women). Another approximately 40% were not ideologically-motivated, but were committed for personal motivations such as greed.

The ECDB collects information on the prior criminal histories of the extremist suspects it codes. Approximately 40% of suspects linked to far-right ideologically-motivated homicides have committed prior crimes, though less than 10% of these priors were ideologically-motivated. Similarly, only half of the coded far-right financial schemes were ideologically-motivated, while nearly 40% percent were motivated

by both ideology and greed. These data suggest that far-rightists may not be “specialists” who only commit ideologically-motivated crimes.

These findings undermine the claims of criminologists who have suggested that different causal explanations are needed for ideological and non-ideological/routine offenders. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990),¹⁵ for example, excluded terrorism and ideologically-motivated offenders from their general theory of crime. They concluded that routine (non-ideological) offenders have low self-control, while ideologically-motivated perpetrators do not. This suggests that the perpetrators of ideological and non-ideological crimes should not overlap. Our preliminary findings are not consistent with Gottfredson and Hirschi’s claims.

Again, the ECDB collects information on the criminal histories (our search protocol includes checking each suspect’s name in States’ Department of Corrections, the Inmate Locator, and other web search engines to identify prior crimes) and life histories (e.g., employment, marriage, family life, and related issues) of its suspects. It is thus uniquely positioned to study the life course and the “criminal careers” of these suspects. The ECDB’s inclusion of criminal histories and life histories may also provide the foundation for the construction of offender narratives and the use of criminal psycho-geography techniques used within investigative psychology.

Most existing terrorism databases develop simple rules and label an incident or suspect terrorist and include it, or label it non-terrorist and exclude it. The reality, however, may be more complex. In response, the ECDB created strength of certainty variables for suspects (based upon the open source information, how certain we are the suspect adheres to an extremist ideology) and incidents (based upon open sources, how certain we are the act is ideologically-motivated). Both variables are coded on a scale from 0–4 (0 = non-ideological; 4 = undisputed evidence of ideology).¹⁵ This scale captures nuances if the suspects committing ideologically-motivated crimes exhibit different levels of commitment to their ideology; and ideologically-motivated acts exhibit different levels of motivation for their etiology.

We focus on the ideologically-motivated homicides committed by far-rightists in the United States since 1990 ($N = 145$). This subset of the ECDB is closest to most terrorism definitions (ideologically-motivated violent acts), though not entirely consistent with them. A preliminary examination indicates that nearly 10% of the suspects committing these ideologically-motivated homicides were not extremists and close to 20% only received a “1” or a “2” regarding our certainty of their association to the movement. Similarly, 50% of the suspects who committed the close to 535 financial schemes were labeled non-extremists. These non-extremist associates collaborated with extremists for a variety of reasons (often greed).

ECDB data thus undermine the traditional distinction between political extremism and non-ideological offenders. These results may support the convergence thesis that methods and motives driving political extremists and opportunistic offenders sometimes coincide. There is evidence that ideologically-motivated individuals who engage in financial crimes benefit from interactions with profit-driven offenders that provide resources for crime, such as knowledge, skills, and suitable co-offenders. Preliminary ECDB data also indicate that a large proportion of non-extremist suspects were professionals with expertise on legal and business matters, indicating that non-extremists may have been service providers for financial extremist schemes.

Most terrorism databases focus on the event level. A few focus on the suspect level, but they usually only collect demographic or network information. The ECDB’s

suspect codebook in addition to these measures captures the ideological beliefs of far-right homicide suspects. The most common ideological issue motivating offenders was anti-race/ethnicity. Twenty-nine far-rightists were killed by law enforcement (12 during far-right homicide incidents and 17 during other events) and 41 far-right suspects committed suicide (22 during far-right homicide incidents and 19 during other events), thus again demonstrating the violent potential of this movement.

The ECDB also collects information on target and victim characteristics and includes individuals who were injured, killed, or targeted. Other terrorism databases usually ignore victims, assuming they are randomly selected and thus a representative sample of the population with no risk patterns to uncover. Our initial analysis of ECDB data, though, found interesting patterns. Far-right homicide attacks claimed over 600 lives (over 430, excluding victims of the Oklahoma City bombing). Over 9% these victims were representatives of law enforcement, correctional officers, or private security guards killed in the line of duty. Interestingly, among the universe of all homicide victims, law enforcement victims usually account for less than 1% of this total in a given year.

Finally, the ECDB is relational and it collects data on multiple units of analysis (i.e., incidents/schemes, suspects, victims and targets, and the social ties between and among the suspects and victims). A relational database allows for analysis across the variables found in the various codebooks. For example, a researcher interested in the characteristics of all far-right suspects involved in a specific type of scheme (e.g., Ponzi) could merge variables from these two different codebooks to create a new distinct dataset. A non-relational database does not have the capabilities to answer such questions.

Conclusion

This article introduced the ongoing open source relational United States Extremist Crime Database (ECDB). We first explained how it was built and discussed reliability and selectivity issues. We then presented some results to illustrate the contributions the ECDB can make to terrorism research. The ECDB is in the middle

Appendix 1: Crimes Collected in the ECDB

Far-right extremists	Islamic extremists	Animal/environmental rights extremists
Homicides, 1990–present	Homicides, 1990–present	Homicides, 1995–present
Suspects killed by police, 1990–present	Suspects killed by police, 1990–present	Suspects killed by police, 1995–present
Suspect suicide at crime scene or subsequently, 1990–present	Suspect suicide at crime scene or subsequently, 1990–present	Suspect suicide at crime scene or subsequently, 1995–present
Foiled plots 1990–present	Foiled plots, 1990–present	Arson, 1995–present
Financial schemes, 1990–present	Financial schemes, 1990–present	Bombings, 1995–present
		Attempted arson or bombings, 1995–present

of data collection. After its current projects are completed at the end of 2015, its data will be archived at the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), and made available to the scholarly and practitioner communities.

Appendix 2: ECDB's Foiled/Failed Plot Typology

1. Foiled/Failed Plots Against Specified People or Target:

- Mention of one or multiple specific target/s (e.g., Brooklyn Bridge, NYC subway system, etc.)
- Overt action toward the execution of that specific mission (e.g., construction of dirty bomb, etc.)
- Temporal and spatial characteristics (even if approximate, e.g., by the end of 2012 in NYC).

Note: Coders will note if the foiled plot was against specified people or target

Note: Within this category, we distinguish between overt acts that acquire weapons and those that do not

2. Foiled/Failed Plots Against Unspecified People or Target:

- Target is mentioned but it is not specific (e.g., Washington, DC; American military personnel)
- Some temporal and spatial characteristics (even if vaguely mentioned)
- Overt activities toward the execution of that specific mission (e.g., purchase of weapon, etc.)

Note: Coders will note if the foiled plot was against specified people or target

Note: Within this category, we distinguish between overt acts that acquire weapons and those that do not

3. Material Support for Jihad:

- No specific target mentioned
- Vague temporal and spatial characteristics (i.e., only time frame available, e.g., from 2001 to 2002 attended jihadi camp in Afghanistan)
- Execution of overt/preparatory activities that do not amount to violent or financial crimes (e.g., training in Jihadi camp, providing medical services to Al Qaeda, purchase of night-vision goggles, etc.)

4. Weapons Stockpiling:

Weapons stockpiling cases must satisfy the following criteria:

- Suspect possesses at least 1 unlawful bomb or other explosive; OR possesses at least 5 unlawful firearms
- No specific or general targets are mentioned

Note: Incidents that are homicides or category 1 or 2 should not also be coded as category 4. But, financial schemes, or category 3 material supports cases could also be coded as category 4 incidents if our criteria are met. *Note:* Importantly, lawful firearms do not play a role in this analysis.

Example: XX arrested while at a rest with a car full of dangerous explosives (explosive requirement satisfied). XX was agitated about Waco and wanted to stash explosives for when the “shit hit the fan.” Also, sold explosives to an undercover agent.

Note: Difference Between Failed and Foiled Plot:

- A failed plot is a violent incident that was set into motion and stopped either through suspect failure or law enforcement action *during the final stages* of the planned incident.
- A foiled plot is a violent incident that is stopped either through suspect desistance or law enforcement action *prior to the final stages* of the planned incident.

Appendix 3: Defining Domestic Extremists

Far-right extremists subscribe to aspects of the following beliefs: They are fiercely nationalistic, anti-global, suspicious of federal authority, and reverent of individual liberties, especially their right to own guns and be free of taxes. They believe in conspiracy theories involving imminent threats to national sovereignty or personal liberty and beliefs that their personal or national “way of life” is under attack. Sometimes such beliefs are vague, but for some the threat originates from specific racial or religious groups. They believe that they must be prepared to defend against this attack by participating in paramilitary training or survivalism.

Al Qaeda-influenced Islamist extremists adhere to aspects of the following beliefs: They believe that only acceptance of Islam promotes human dignity. Islamic extremists reject the traditional Muslim respect for “People of the Book” (i.e., Christians and Jews). They believe that “Jihad” (i.e., to struggle in God’s path like the Prophet Muhammad) is a defining belief in Islam and includes the “lesser Jihad” that endorses violence against “corrupt” others. Islamic extremists believe that their faith is oppressed in nominally Muslim Middle-Eastern/Asian corrupt governments and in nations (e.g., Russia/Chechnya) that occupy Islamic populations. The U.S. is seen as supporting the humiliation of Islam, and exploiting the region’s resources. They believe that America’s hedonistic culture (e.g., gay rights, feminism, etc.) negatively affects Muslim values. Islamic extremists believe that the American people are responsible for their government’s actions and that there is a religious obligation to combat this assault. They believe that Islamic law—Sharia—provides the blueprint for a modern Muslim society and should be forcibly implemented.

Animal/environmental rights extremists support aspects of the following beliefs: They endorse biodiversity/biocentric equality (i.e., that humans have no legitimate claim to dominate the earth). They believe that the earth and animals are in imminent danger and that the government and corporations are responsible for this danger, which will ultimately result in the environment’s destruction. These extremists believe that the “system” is incapable of taking actions to protect the environment and biological diversity. Thus, there is a need to defend the environment and animals, and violent actions to achieve this are justified.

Appendix 4: Sources Reviewed by the ECDB to Identify Illegal Violent Incidents and Financial Schemes

Official Sources

- Congressional hearing reports
- Congressional Research Service reports
- Department of Homeland Security domestic terrorism newsletters and reports
- Department of Justice agencies press releases about (and sometimes links to) indictments, and convictions about a range of illegal acts
- FBI’s *Terrorism in the United States* annual report (until 2005)
- Internal Revenue Service (IRS) website
- National Counterterrorism Center’s Worldwide Incidents Tracking System
- (WITS), since 2005.
- New York State Intelligence Center Reports.
- State and Local Anti-Terrorism Training’s (SLATT) chronology

Academic|Scholarly|Think-Tank|Media Databases|Chronologies|Narratives

- Al Qaeda in the United States: A complete analysis of terrorism offenses (Simox & Dyer)
- American Terrorism Study (ATS)
- Avlon's listing of 45 foiled terror plots since 9/11 (The Daily Best)
- Bipartisan Policy Center's National Security Preparedness Group (NSPG) reports
- Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law reports
- Center on Law & Security
- Crenshaw's post 9/11 foiled plots chronology
- Crime Commission of NYC domestic terrorism listing
- Dahl's listing of unsuccessful plots and attacks against American targets
- Foundation for Defense of Democracies listings of U.S. terrorist events
- Global Terrorism Database
- Heritage Foundation's listing of 30 foiled terrorist plots post 9/11
- Hewitt's Chronology
- Human Rights First, the NYU Center on Law and Security
- Institute for Homeland Security Solutions (IHSS): Building on Clues: Examining Successes and Failures in Detecting U.S. Terrorist Plots, 1999–2009
- Krueger's study on participation in domestic Islamic terrorist groups in USA
- Kurzman at Triangle Institute for Terrorism and Homeland Security: Muslim-American Terrorism Since 9/11: An Accounting
- Kushner's Chronology
- Leiken's listing of foiled plots
- Mueller's listing of post 9/11 terrorist plots
- Monterey Institute's database on chemical, biological, nuclear cases
- Mother Jones Profiles in Terror listing alleged domestic terrorists
- New American Foundation and the Maxwell School, Syracuse University's listing of extremist suspects who were either indicted or killed between 2001 and 2011
- NEFA Foundation, Investigative Project
- NYU Law
- RAND-Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism's Terrorism Knowledge
- Rand Reports by Jenkins and others
- Shanzer, Kurzman, and Moosa NIJ Report: Anti-Terror Lessons of Muslim-Americans
- Terrorist Trial Report Card
- Vidino study on homegrown terrorism
- Literature review of over 500 articles on far-right, econ/animal rights extremists, and Islamic extremists
- We also conducted systematic media searches of the main Lexis-Nexis interface, *The New York Times*, and other web-sources.

Watch-Group and Movement Organizations

- Animal Liberation Front, Complete U.S. Diary of Actions: The First 30 Years
- Anti-Defamation League (ADL) chronologies, reports, and website (i.e., multiple publications)
- Arnold's Chronology
- Bryan Denson Incidents
- Center for Democratic Renewal publications and chronologies

- Eco Crimes list
- Fur Commission (news articles summarized)
- The Foundation for Biomedical Research Illegal Incidents Chronology
- The Henry Jackson Society
- The Investigative Project
- Jihad Watch website
- National Animal Interest Alliance website
- Militia Watchdog Organization
- Muslim Public Affairs Council: Policy Report Data on Post-9/11 Terrorism in the United States
- Political Resource Associates publications and chronologies
- Quatloos, Bombs Taxes & Crayons, The Tax Prophet, and the Tax Protester Dossier for far right-related schemes
- Rick Ross Website
- Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) chronologies, Intelligence Reports, and website (i.e., multiple publications)

Appendix 5: Web Search Engines Used to Uncover Open-source Materials on Identified Violent and Financial Crimes

1. Lexis-Nexis
2. Proquest
3. Yahoo
4. Google
5. Copernic
6. News Library
7. Westlaw
8. Google Scholar (both articles and legal opinions)
9. Amazon
10. Google U.S. Government
11. Federation of American Scientists
12. Google Video
13. Center for the Study of Intelligence
14. Surf Wax
15. Dogpile
16. Mamma
17. Librarians' Internet Index
18. Scirus
19. All the Web
20. Google News
21. Google Blog
22. Homeland Security Digital Library
23. Vinelink
24. The inmate locator
25. Individual State Department of Corrections (DOCs)
26. Blackbookonline.info
27. Blackbookonline.info
28. Quantloos

29. Anti-Defamation League
30. Southern Poverty Law Center
31. Center on Law and Security

Note: From March 2006 to March 2009, a 27th search engine—infotrac—was searched. This engine was then removed from the John Jay College and Michigan State University online libraries.

Appendix 6: Ranking of Source Reliability

- Appellate court proceedings
- Court proceedings subject to cross examination (e.g., trial transcripts)
- Court proceedings or documents not subject to cross examination (e.g., indictments)
- Corroborated information from people with direct access to information provided (e.g., law enforcement and other key informants)
- Uncorroborated statements from people with that access
- Media reports.
- Watch-group reports
- Personal views expressed in blogs, websites, editorials or Op-Ed, etc.

Notes

1. Similar to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports and the Global Terrorism Database (GTD), incidents are distinct if they occur at different times, in different locations, and are not linked to earlier acts that were necessary for subsequent acts to occur.

2. Donald deKiefer, "Trade Diversion as a Fundraising and Money Laundering Technique of Terrorist Organizations," in Thomas J. Biersteker and Sue Eckert, eds., *Countering the Financing of Terrorism* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 150–173; Chris Dishman, "The Leaderless Nexus: When Crime and Terror Converge," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 28 (2005): 237–252; John Horgan and Max Taylor, "Playing the Green Card—Financing the Provisional IRA: Part 2," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 15 (2003): 1–60; and Nikos Passas, *Informal Value Transfer Systems, Money Laundering and Terrorism* (Washington DC: Report to the National Institute of Justice and the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, 2003).

3. John Kane and April Wall, *Identifying the Links Between White Collar Crime and Terrorism* (Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice, 2005); and Brent L. Smith and Kelly R. Damphousse, *The American Terrorism Study* (Oklahoma City: Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism, 2003).

4. Roberta Belli and Joshua D. Freilich, "Situational Crime Prevention and Non-Violent Terrorism: A 'Soft' Approach against Ideologically-Motivated Tax-Refusal," *Crime Prevention Studies* 25 (2009): 173–206.

5. Incidents where no suspect is identified are included if there is documented self-admission that claims responsibility either contemporaneously or after the fact, such as a note left at the scene or a subsequent communiqué. Additionally, if an incident or scheme is also committed by non-extremists (in addition to at least one of the extremist types listed above), the ECDB codes their attributes too. The ECDB codes all suspects, including non-extremists.

6. James A. Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness: Idaho Christian Patriotism* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995); Mark S. Hamm, *Apocalypse in Oklahoma City: Waco and Ruby Ridge Revenged* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997); Mark S. Hamm, *In Bad Company: America's Terrorist Underground* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2002); Christopher Hewitt, *Understanding Terrorism in America: From the Klan to Al Qaeda*

(New York: Routledge, 2003); David A. Neiwert, *In God's Country: The Patriot Movement in the Pacific Northwest* (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1999); and Robert L. Snow, *The Militia Threat: Terrorists Among Us* (New York: Plenum Trade, 1999).

7. Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

8. Steven M. Chermak, Joshua D. Freilich, William S. Parkin, and James P. Lynch, "American Terrorism and Extremist Crime Data Sources and Selectivity Bias: An Investigation Focusing on Homicide Events Committed by Far-Right Extremists," *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 28 (2012): 191–218.

9. Preliminary analyses of our other data collection efforts indicate animal and environmental rights extremists committed over 230 ideologically motivated bombings and arsons since 1995. Supporters of Al Qaeda and similar movements have committed close to 35 homicide incidents, and scores of foiled plots that targeted hundreds of specific and general targets since 1990.

10. Alex P. Schmid and A. J. Jongman, *Political Terrorism: A New Guide to Actors, Authors, Concepts, Databases, Theories and Literature* (Oxford, UK: North Holland, 1988); Andrew Silke, "Terrorism and the Blind Men's Elephant," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 8 (1996): 12–28; Steven M. Chermak, Joshua D. Freilich, and Joseph Simone, Jr., "Surveying American State Police Agencies About Lone Wolves, Far-Right Criminality, and Far-Right and Islamic Jihadist Criminal Collaboration," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 33 (2010): 1019–1041.

11. Financial crimes are often committed during larger criminal operations involving multiple perpetrators and jurisdictions over an extended period of time. These crimes are difficult to study. To capture these nuances we developed the concept of "financial scheme," defined as an illicit financial operation involving a set of activities (i.e., techniques) carried out by one or more perpetrators to obtain unlawful gain or other economic advantage through the use of deliberate deception (e.g., a money-laundering scheme that "cleans" money from illegal drug smuggling to fund a terrorist mission).

12. Rory McVeigh, "Structural Incentives for Conservative Mobilization: Power Devaluation and the Rise of the Ku Klux Klan, 1915–1925," *Social Forces* 77 (1999): 1461–1496; and Rory McVeigh, *The Rise of the Ku Klux Klan: Right-Wing Movements and National Politics* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009).

13. Jeffrey Kaplan, "Leaderless Resistance," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 9(1997): 80–95.

14. Hewitt (see note 6 above); and Smith and Damphousse (see note 3 above).

15. Michael Gottfredson and Travis Hirschi, *A General Theory of Crime* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990).

16. Suspects or incidents for which a) at least two independent indicators indicate an ideological association (suspect) or motive for the attack (incident) and b) no contrary evidence is found are coded as 4; Suspects or incidents for which a) only one indicator indicates an ideological association (suspect) or motive for the attack (incident) and b) no contrary evidence is found are coded as 3; Suspects or incidents for which a) at least two independent indicators indicate an ideological association (suspect) or motive for the attack (incident) and b) contrary evidence is found are coded as 2; Suspects or incidents for which a) only one indicator indicate an ideological association (suspect) or motive for the attack (incident); and b) contrary evidence is found are coded as 1.